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UNCLAS ANKARA 006910

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: TURKEY ACCEDES TO THE OTTAWA CONVENTION ON
LANDMINES

1. During a meeting on another topic, MFA Head of Department for Disarmament Affairs confirmed to PolMilOff that Turkey had deposited its instrument of ratification for the Ottawa convention simultaneously with Greece on September 25, 2003. MERIC reminded PolMilOff that Turkey was party to every disarmament and nonproliferation treaty for which it was eligible. Nevertheless he was unable to update PolMilOff on the status of demining along the Syrian and Greek borders, initiatives that had been undertaken in an effort to improve relations with these two neighbors.

2. Separately, we learned from other sources at MFA that, although an intended benefit of demining along the Syrian border was to improve relations with Damascus, the demining is a unilateral action that had been previously announced but lacked funding. The GOT's announcement (again) of this project was due to the recent identification of funding.
EDELMAN